

Amendments to the Claims:

The following claims will replace all prior versions of the claims in this application (in the unlikely event that no claims follow herein, the previously pending claims will remain):

1-15. (Cancelled).

16. (Currently amended) A method of making from laminate a carbon-fiber-filled sheet molding compound having the characteristics of light weight, high stiffness and strength, the method comprising providing chopped carbon fibers, a predetermined resin, a first carrier film and a second carrier film, coating one side of one of the first and second carrier films with the predetermined resin to define a coated side of the one of the first and second carrier films, depositing the chopped carbon fibers onto the coated side of the first carrier film, covering the deposited carbon fibers with the second carrier film to define a compactible carbon-filled laminate, [and] compacting the carbon-filled laminate to admix the resin with the carbon fibers between the films, whereby to form the carbon fiber-filled sheet molding compound, and maintaining the compacted laminate for a set time period to mature the laminate for further molding.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the chopped carbon fibers have lengths between 5 and 100 millimeters.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the carbon fibers have a K value of greater 20.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the resin includes at most about 75% by weight of filler based on the weight of the resin.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein individual filaments of the fibers are wetted as a result of compaction.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising coating one side of the other of the first and second films with the predetermined paste.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of compacting the carbon-filled laminate comprises rolling the carbon-filled laminate between hold-down rolls.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the first and second carrier films comprise polyethylene/polyamide.

25. (New) A method of making from laminate a carbon-fiber-filled sheet molding compound having the characteristics of light weight, high stiffness and strength, the method comprising providing chopped carbon fibers, a predetermined resin, a first carrier film and a second carrier film, coating one side of one of the first and second carrier films with the predetermined resin to define a coated side of the one of the first and second carrier films, depositing the chopped carbon fibers onto the coated side of the first carrier film, covering the deposited carbon fibers with the second carrier film to define a compactible carbon-filled laminate, and compacting the carbon-filled laminate to admix the resin with the carbon fibers between the films, whereby to form the carbon fiber-filled sheet molding compound, wherein the resin includes at most about 75% by weight of filler based on the weight of the resin.

26. (New) A method of making from laminate a carbon-fiber-filled sheet molding compound having the characteristics of light weight, high stiffness and strength, the method comprising providing chopped carbon fibers, a predetermined resin, a first carrier film and a second carrier film, coating one side of one of the first and second carrier films with the predetermined resin to define a coated side of the one of the first and second carrier films, depositing the chopped carbon fibers onto the coated side of the first carrier film, covering the deposited carbon fibers with the second carrier film to define a compactible carbon-filled laminate, and compacting the carbon-filled laminate to admix the resin with the carbon fibers between the films by

rolling the carbon-filled laminate between hold-down rolls, whereby to form the carbon fiber-filled sheet molding compound.